

SECTION G-D: EVALUATION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Experience & Practice #8: 21st CCLC Program Goals and Objectives

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program uses multiple objectives and performance indicators to measure the progress of 21st CCLC grantees, as described below:

GOAL: To enable elementary and secondary schools to plan, implement, or expand extended learning opportunities for the benefit of the educational, health, social service, cultural, and recreational needs of their communities.

Objective 1 -Participants in 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs will demonstrate educational and social benefits and exhibit positive behavioral changes.

1.1 Achievement. Increasing percentages of students regularly participating in the program will meet or exceed State and local academic achievement standards in reading and mathematics.

1.2 Behavior. Students participating in the program will show improvements on measures such as school attendance, classroom performance, and decreased disciplinary actions or other adverse behaviors.

Objective 2 -21st Century Community Learning Centers programs will offer a range of high quality educational, developmental, and recreational services.

2.1 Core educational services. All sites will offer high quality services in core academic areas, e.g., reading and literacy, mathematics, and science.

2.2 Enrichment and support activities. All sites will offer enrichment and support activities such as nutrition and health, art, music, technology, and recreation.

D-1: What is scientifically based research?

Scientifically based research, as defined in Title IX of the reauthorized ESEA, is research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs. This means research that:

- (1) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
- (2) involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;
- (3) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators;
- (4) is evaluated using experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment, experiments, or other designs to the extent that those designs contain within-condition or across-condition controls;
- (5) ensures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings;
- (6) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.

D-2: When is scientifically based research appropriate for the 21st CCLC program?

When providing services in core academic areas where scientifically based research has been conducted and is available, such as reading and mathematics, a community learning center should employ strategies based on such research. The USDOE, in collaboration with other agencies, will continue to identify programs and practices based on rigorous scientific research and will ensure that information about such programs is made widely available.

Experience & Practice #9: Scientifically Based Reading Research

Scientifically based reading research has identified five essential components of effective reading instruction. To ensure that children learn to read well, explicit and systematic instruction must be provided in these five areas:

1. **Phonemic Awareness** -The ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds, phonemes, in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that the sounds of spoken language work together to make words.
2. **Phonics** -The understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes (the sounds of spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spellings that represent those sounds) in written language. Readers use these relationships to recognize familiar words accurately and automatically and to decode unfamiliar words.
3. **Vocabulary Development** -Development of stored information about the meanings and pronunciation of words necessary for communication. There are four types of vocabulary:
 - ◆ Listening vocabulary -the words needed to understand what is heard.
 - ◆ Speaking vocabulary -the words used when speaking.
 - ◆ Reading vocabulary -the words needed to understand what is read.
 - ◆ Writing vocabulary -the words used in writing.
4. **Reading fluency**, including oral reading skills -Fluency is the ability to read text accurately and quickly. It provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Fluent readers recognize words and comprehend at the same time.
5. **Reading comprehension strategies** -Strategies for understanding, remembering, and communicating with others about what has been read. Comprehension strategies are sets of steps that purposeful, active readers use to make sense of text.

D-3: What are the evaluation requirements for the State of Idaho

States must conduct a comprehensive evaluation (directly, or through a grant or contract) of the effectiveness of programs and activities provided with 21st CCLC funds. In their applications to the USDOE, States are required to describe the performance indicators and performance measures they will use to evaluate local programs. States must also monitor the periodic evaluations of local programs and must disseminate the results of these evaluations to the public.

D-4: What are the evaluation requirements for local grantees?

Each grantee must undergo a periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal of providing high-quality opportunities for academic enrichment. The evaluation must be based on the factors included in the *Principles of Effectiveness*. The results of the evaluation must be:

- (1) used to refine, improve, and strengthen the program and to refine the performance measures; and
- (2) made available to the public upon request. Local grantees, working with SDE, must evaluate the academic progress of children participating in the 21st CCLC program.

Experience & Practice #10: Recommendations for After-School Programming

After-School Programs and the K-8 Principals, developed by the National Association for Elementary School Principals (NAESP), in cooperation with the National Institute on Out of School Time, The National School-Age Care Alliance, and the USDOE, identifies standards for quality school-age child care. One of the standards of excellence that specifically pertains to after-school programming reflects a commitment to promoting knowledge, skills, and understandings through enriching learning opportunities that complement the school day. Specifically, high-quality after-school programs should offer opportunities for children to develop in the following areas:

- 1) Communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, spelling, and listening.
- 2) Math skills in computation, application, and problem solving.
- 3) Scientific inquiry into the natural and physical world, as well as practical applications of science and technology.
- 4) The interrelationships of people and cultures to historic, geographic and economic environments.
- 5) Participation in the arts, including visual arts, music, dance, and drama.
- 6) Development of physical fitness and motor skills through sports and other physical activity.
- 7) Opportunities for problem-solving that strengthen decision-making and higher-level thinking skills.
- 8) Study and time-management skills to encourage children's responsibility for their own learning.
- 9) Personal and civic responsibility and the significance of service to others.
- 10) Appreciation of, and respect for, differences in culture, race, and gender.
- 11) Skill development in computer and multimedia technology.

(Source: The National Association of Elementary School Principals. ***After-School Programs & The K-8 Principal***, p.7)

The National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA) has developed the ***NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care***, which may be a useful tool in developing and evaluating programs. In addition, NSACA publishes the journal ***School-Age Review***, which contains important developments in theory, research and practice in the after-school field.

D-5: What data will grantees have to report annually?

Standard or core evaluation data across grantees will be collected and reported by the Idaho 21st CCLC Management System. A *draft* of the annual performance report data requirements is provided below.

**Indicates items found in the Idaho 21st CCLC Management System.*

Grant Level Data

- ◆ Program objective attainment -status, changes, comments
- ◆ Planned project adjustments based on formative evaluation results
- ◆ Community collaboration and involvement

Center Level Data (Data must be submitted for each center)

- ◆ Characteristics of the center
- ◆ Characteristics of the host schools
- ◆ Center participation*
- ◆ Hours of operation*
- ◆ Student demographics*
- ◆ Regular attendees vs. non-regular*
- ◆ Activities provided*
- ◆ Linkages to school day
- ◆ Observational ratings of programs*

Achievement Data (Data must be submitted for each center)

- ◆ Academic achievement*
- ◆ Grade level*
- ◆ School name*
- ◆ Regular attendees*
- ◆ Achievement test results*
- ◆ Grades (math, reading, English/language arts) *
- ◆ Survey Data*
- ◆ Teacher survey results*
- ◆ Student survey results*
- ◆ Parent survey results*

Experience & Practice #11: Evaluation Recommendations and Resources

Good evaluations start with a set of important questions that can be answered during the actual evaluation. In large part, those questions may be determined through a careful analysis of the goals of the program. For example, improving academic achievement is, by statute, a mandatory goal. Each goal should have specific indicators that are measurable and that can be assessed repeatedly over time to track progress. An indicator for improving academic achievement, for example, ISAT test scores. Once the goals and indicators have been framed, local grantees should identify data sources that are available for the indicator.

In addition, the USDOE and the American Institutes for Research developed *A Guide to Continuous Improvement Management (CIM) for 21st Century Community Learning Centers*, to address the need for on-going self-assessment and self-evaluation of 21st CCLC Programs. To download the Continuous Improvement Management Guide, go to <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES>

D-6: How does a State ensure that organizations other than LEAs will be able to provide academic enrichment and have access to student achievement data?

In the local competitions, states must include a priority for applications submitted jointly by (1) an LEA receiving Title I funds, and (2) Community Based Organization (CBO) or other public or private organizations that propose to serve students attending schools in need of improvement. **Through such partnerships a grantee responsible for implementing and evaluating the local program can ensure access to student achievement data.** Because of the legal obligation to maintain confidentiality of student data, the USDOE encourages LEAs to gather the achievement data necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The LEAs should also be responsible for sharing the content area standards and curriculum with its partners.